

Russians roll out Service Module

By John Ira Petty

The Service Module, a major Russian contribution to the International Space Station, was formally introduced at a press conference-rollout ceremony at RSC-Energia at Korolev, near Moscow.

The Service Module is to become the third major element of the ISS. It is to be transported in mid-May to the launch site at Baikonur for launch later this year.

The ceremonies at Korolev attracted about 300 people, including representatives of major media organizations from throughout the world. The 13 participants in the press conference included Mike Baker, NASA's head of human space flight programs in Russia, Yuri P. Semenov, president of Energia and its general designer, and other top leaders in Russia's human space flight program.

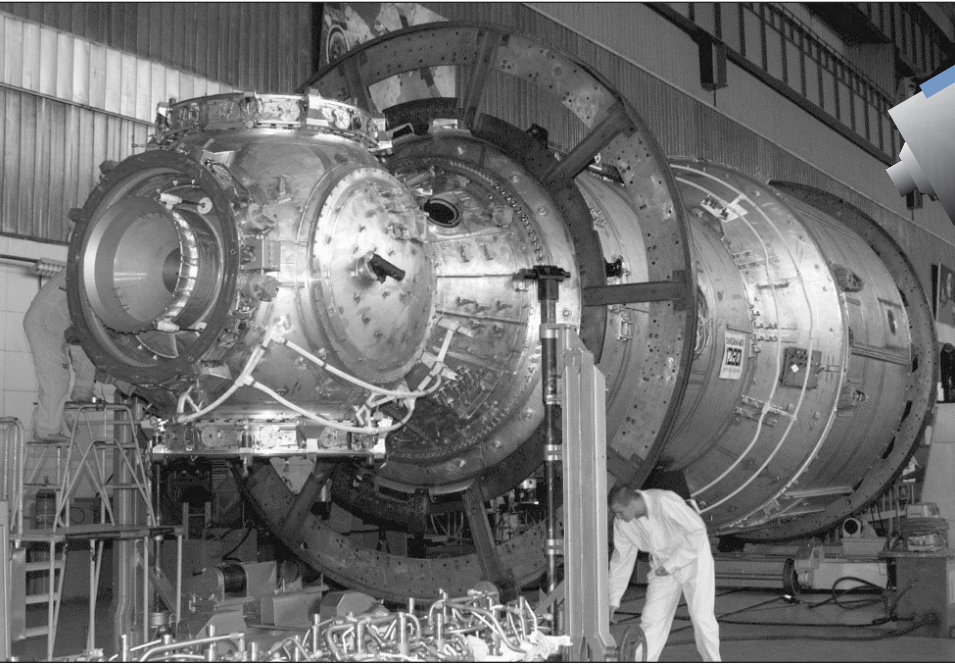
Semenov said he believed cooperation between the space agencies of the two countries would continue. Baker said he believes the Russia-U.S. partnership is very strong. "We work very well together," and we look forward to a long future of cooperation in space.

Those attending the ceremonies at Energia, just north of the Russian capital, were treated to a visit to the company's museum. It houses artifacts from the pre-Sputnik era through the International Space Station. Displays include the capsule of Yuri Gagarin, the first man in space.

The press conference began in the modern, theater-like facility after a film on

the Russian space program was shown. Among others at the participants' table were Yuri N. Koptev, general director of the Russian Space Agency; Anatoli Kiselev, general director of Khurnichev

their space station Mir, expected by some in April, would not take place before the summer. They said they were seeking private funding to keep the aging station aloft. Indeed, Koptev said they



The Service Module will be the first fully Russian contribution to the International Space Station and will serve as the early cornerstone for the first human habitation of the station.

State Production and Scientific Center; Valery V. Ryumin, vice president and ISS program manager of Energia, and Frank Longhurst, European Space Agency Program Manager for the ISS.

Russian officials said at the press conference that a decision on deorbiting

were close to finding private funding to keep Mir in orbit.

In no case will deorbit occur before August. Koptev said Mir would stay in orbit through 1999, even if finances prevented it from being crewed during part of that period.

The Russians continue to say they will meet their commitments to the ISS, as they are financially able to do so. After the press conference, participants and the audience moved to an adjacent shop building. After putting on white lab coats, they walked to an area where the 43-foot-long Service Module itself was displayed, for brief ceremonies there and filming.

The low-key ceremony reflected a major milestone in the ISS Program.

The Service Module is the first Russian-financed and Russian-built contribution to the ISS. It includes living quarters for early station crews, a life-support system, a propulsion system as well as electrical power distribution, a data processing system, and a flight control system. Its communications system will give flight controllers on the ground remote command capabilities.

Even after some of its functions are supplemented or taken over by U.S. elements to be launched later, the 42,000-pound Service Module with its three pressurized compartments will remain the center of the Russian part of the ISS. ■

JSC Clinic offers bone density testing for women

The JSC Clinic is proud to announce the acquisition of the Sahara ultrasound bone densitometer. This device is used to help assess bone density. The test is performed in a seated position with your bare foot comfortably placed in the ultrasound unit.

The entire procedure takes about one minute. It involves no discomfort, no injections, and no invasive procedures. High-frequency sound waves are passed

through your heel and the bone density is estimated from characteristics of the transmitted sound waves. The ultrasound unit immediately processes your test results. A physician will discuss the results with the patient.

Beginning June 1, 1999, this test will be included as part of the annual physical exam testing for women. Women desiring to take the test apart from their yearly

physical exam and contractor personnel who want to take this test should call the JSC Clinic at x34111 to schedule an appointment.

Additional information may be obtained by contacting the clinic's nursing staff at x37783. Although this test can be performed only on women now, the Food and Drug Administration is currently evaluating a bone density test for men. ■

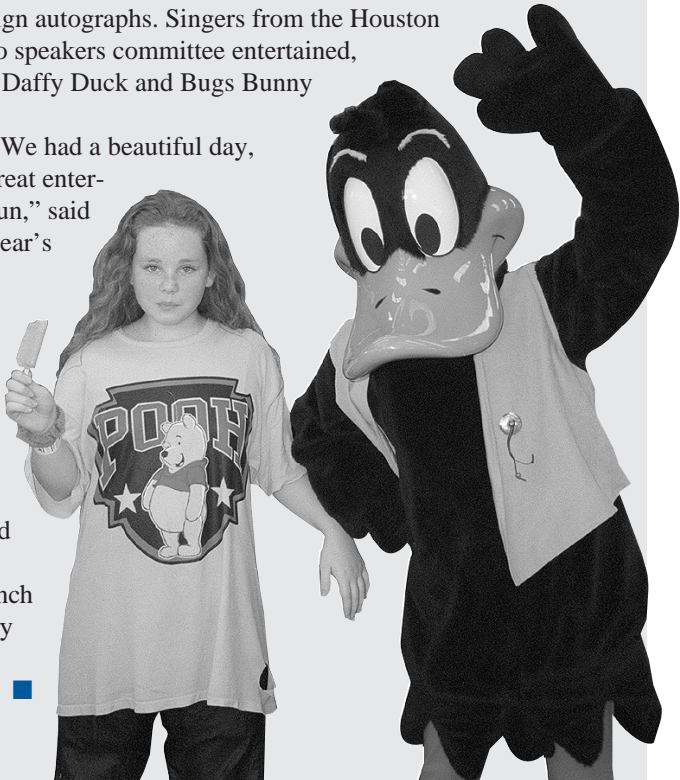
Sunshine, friendship, fun highlight JSC Family Picnic

Sunshine, barbecue and thrills were the highlight at the April 11 NASA-JSC Family Picnic as a sellout crowd took advantage of the opportunity to mingle with friends and experience the excitement of Astroworld.

JSC Employee Activities Association President Ginger Gibson said this year's picnic, the fifth consecutive one to be held at Astroworld, drew more than 3,000 NASA employees, retirees, contractors and their families and friends. Astronauts Mike Massimino, Susan Still, Willie McCool, Ellen Baker and Carlos Noriega were on hand to sign autographs. Singers from the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo speakers committee entertained, and Astroworld characters Daffy Duck and Bugs Bunny amused the crowd.

"It was a great success. We had a beautiful day, there was good food and great entertainment and Astroworld fun," said Gibson, who chaired this year's picnic committee.

This photograph shows some of the fun that took place at Astroworld's A&W Ranch, where JSC employees gathered to enjoy barbecue and each other's company, play horseshoes or volleyball and listen to music. In addition, those who made it to the ranch received free complimentary passes for another visit to Astroworld later this year. ■



JSC Safety Alert

Hot Work Hazards

What Happened

A small fire erupted at the MSFC in Bldg. 4755 where hardware mockups were being stored in support of the International Space Station. The building was evacuated, and the fire was quickly contained and extinguished by the Redstone Fire Department. No one was injured, and after the residual smoke was exhausted from the building, employees were allowed to return to work.

Outcome of the Investigation

The exact reason for the fire is under investigation. The preliminary investigation suggests that slag from a welding operation started the fire. Technicians, setting up an arc welder on the overhead crane above the mockup storage area, struck an arc to test the system and noticed smoke from below almost immediately. MSFC is evaluating the duct and other mockup materials for flammability, based on the rapid development of the fire. Fire damage was limited to a few items of hardware mockups; however, the damage is not expected to have any impact on space station program activities.

What You Can Do

Review hot work permits and setup procedures for your area. All personnel issuing hot work permits should observe the surrounding work areas to ensure flammable materials are removed or properly protected. When working in elevated locations, verify the composition of materials below, and ensure they are protected by flame resistant material where necessary. If you have any questions, consult the facility manager for the specific area before beginning work.

Roundup deadlines

The Space Center Roundup is published every other Friday. Story ideas and articles should be submitted as far in advance as possible, but no later than two weeks prior to the date of publication.

The deadline for Dates & Data calendar items is three weeks prior to the date of publication. Stories and ideas should be submitted to Editor Bill Jeffs in Bldg. 2, Rm. 181, or via e-mail to william.p.jeffs@jsc.nasa.gov.

Retirees should submit change of address notices to the distribution group at Mail GP443 or call Ignacia Ramirez at 281-483-6161. ■